Daily Report

Latin America

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FBIS-LAT-88-061 *30 March 1988*

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SELA Condemns U.S. Measures Against Panama

PA292150 Paris AFP in Spanish 2127 GMT 29 Mar 88

[Text] Caracas, 29 Mar (AFP)—SELA, at the conclusion of the extraordinary meeting of its highest body—the Latin American Council—unanimously agreed to repudiate the U.S. coercive measures against Panama, and it urged Washington to immediately revoke them.

SELA—of its 26 members, only El Salvador, Honduras, and Grenada were absent from the meeting—ordered its permanent secretary, Carlos Perez del Castillo, to begin a trip through the region next week to coordinate measures and actions to provide economic and financial cooperation to Panama.

Cuba

Castro Discusses Arms, S. Africa With Adamishin

FL291809 Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 1700 GMT 29 Mar 88

[Text] Commander in Chief Fidel Castro has received Anatoliy Adamishin, deputy foreign minister of the USSR, who informed him about the talks recently held in Washington between Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze and U.S. Secretary of State George Shultz. Fidel showed special interest in the draft treaty reducing strategic arms by 50 percent to be examined at the fourth Soviet-American summit in Moscow in May. He also expressed interest in a draft convention to ban chemical weapons, a reduction in military troops and conventional weapons in Europe, and regional issues.

The two exchanged views on the situation in southern Africa in light of the new prospects for the peaceful settlement of the regional crisis based on a balance of the area countries' interests and on respect for the right of peoples to choose their own path to development. They confirmed that the USSR and Cuba hold identical views on the use of all available resources to put an end, as soon as possible, to the aggression and to effect the withdrawal of the South African troops from Angola, as well as to implement the decisions of the UN Security Council concerning Namibian independence.

CEA Secretary Meets With Soviet Scientists

FL252010 Havana Radio Progreso Network in Spanish 1100 GMT 25 Mar 88

[Text] Fidel Castro Diaz-Balart, executive secretary of the Cuban Atomic Energy Commission [CEA], met yesterday with Soviet specialists of the academic center of Novosibirsk. Members of a Cuban delegation and Valentin Koptyug, vice president of the USSR Academy of Sciences, participated in the meeting.

The two sides analyzed areas of possible cooperation in the peaceful use of nuclear energy.

Atomic Energy Plan Signed

FL300140 Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 2300 GMT 29 Mar 88

[Text] Cuba and the Soviet Union signed an atomic energy cooperation plan for 1988-89 in Moscow today.

During the talks held in the USSR by Fidel Castro Diaz-Balart, executive secretary of the CEA of Cuba, the joint work for the creation of a nuclear research center in Cuba with Soviet aid was discussed, among other matters.

Further on Visit of CSSR Defense Minister

Raul Castro Attends Reception

FL281045 Havana Radio Progreso Network in Spanish 1100 GMT 26 Mar 88

[Text] Army General Raul Castro, FAR minister, attended a reception in honor of Milan Vaclavik, CSSR defense minister, last night.

The reception was hosted by CSSR Ambassador Stanislav Svoboda. Other party leaders and high-ranking FAR officers were also present.

Solidarity Order Awarded

FL292225 Havana Television Service in Spanish 0000 GMT 27 Mar 88

[Text] Army General Raul Castro, second secretary of the PCC Central Committee and FAR minister, has bestowed the Order of Solidarity on Army General Milan Vaclavik, member of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia Central Committee and national defense minister of this brother country. The other members of the high-level delegation of the CSSR's People's Army received the Medal of Combative Fraternity.

[Begin recording] [Raul Castro] The historic ties that unite the CSSR with the Cuban revolution will soon be 30 years old. Those friendship ties, which were established during difficult times, have been developed and strengthened through the years. At a time like this, I have to mention the relations of fraternity and camaraderie that have united me with generals and officials of the CSSR's People's Army for a long time.

You, Comrade Army General Milan Vaclavik, are an honorable representative and have continued the combative tradition of the Czechoslovak people and their Armed Forces. The Council of State of the Republic of Cuba has decided, Comrade Army General, to confer on you the Order of Solidarity and on the members of the delegation accompanying you the Medal of Combative Fraternity.

[Vaclavik, in vernacular with simultaneous translation into Spanish] At this solemn time, I would like to stress once more how much we appreciate the high level of the close relations between our brother parties and states based on the principles of socialist internationalism. Once more, I thank you for the decorations awarded. We wish the heroic Cuban people and the FAR new successes in the construction and defense of its beautiful fatherland. Long live the strength of our friendship and combative solidarity! [end recording]

Meets With Fidel Castro

LD272100 Prague Domestic Service in Czech 0900 GMT 27 Mar 88

[Text] Cuba—Fidel Castro, the country's highest representative, has had talks with Army General Milan Vaclavik, the Czechoslovak minister of national defense, on some military and political aspects of the current international situation. During its stay in Cuba, the delegation of the Czechoslovak People's Army, which has been making an official visit there, had talks with Cuban Defense Minister Raul Castro and toured a number of military facilities and institutions near Havana.

Polish Domestic Trade Minister Arrives

FL232351 Havana Radio Reloj Network in Spanish 1913 GMT 23 Mar 88

[Text] Jerzy Jozwiak, minister of domestic trade and services of the Polish People's Republic, was welcomed at the Havana airport today by his Cuban counterpart, Manuel Vila Sosa. Among the objectives of his visit, the Polish minister seeks to assess cooperation between the two ministries, exchange goods, explore the possibility of exchanging raw material surpluses, and find a site for the Varsovia Restaurant in Havana.

Ministers Tour Factory

FL291126 Havana Television Service in Spanish 0000 GMT 29 Mar 88

[Text] As part of his visit to our country, Comrade Jerzy Jozwiak, minister of domestic trade and services of the Polish People's Republic, today toured the factory that produces and assembles commercial equipment.

The Polish minister and his delegation were received by Manuel Vila Sosa, minister of domestic trade, who briefed the visitors on some of the equipment manufactured in the center based on innovations by the workers.

During the tour, Vila Sosa described how they have been able to substitute imports and spoke of the importance of some of this equipment in commercial activity. He also explained to his Polish counterpart the other products of the center, such as water tanks and refrigeration equipment to be installed in the housing for minibrigade workers who build social projects in the capital.

Before leaving the factory, the Polish official signed the book that contains the history of the center, wherein he acknowledged the effort of the collective in manufacturing high-quality products.

Cooperation Protocol Signed

FL300050 Havana Radio Reloj Network in Spanish 1944 GMT 29 Mar 88

[Text] Manuel Vila Sosa, minister of domestic trade, and Jerzy Jozwiak, minister of domestic trade and services of the Polish People's Republic, signed a bilateral cooperation protocol in Havana today.

During the ceremony, Vila Sosa awarded Jozwiak the Fernando Chenard Pena decoration in recognition of his efforts in the binding and strengthening of relations between Cuba and Poland. The Polish minister expressed thanks to the ministry and the National Trade Union of Commerce and Restaurant Workers. He added that the incentive will motivate him to work even more for the development of relations between the two countries.

The agreement will bring an increase in the exchange of merchandise between the two organizations and their respective enterprises. It also establishes a basis for a better development of those relations in the coming years.

GDR National Front President Arrives on Visit

FL252029 Havana Tele-Rebelde Network in Spanish 1100 GMT 25 Mar 88

[Text] Dr Lothar Kolditz, president of the National Front of the GDR, arrived in our country yesterday afternoon. He was received by Armando Acosta Cordero, national coordinator of the CDR [Committees for the Defense of the Revolution], and by Karl-Heinz Moebus, GDR ambassador to Cuba.

Dr Kolditz will hold talks with members of the national secretariat of the CDR, Cuba's counterpart organization. He will also be honored with the 28 September decoration.

The president of the GDR's National Front and his delegation will also visit Santiago de Cuba.

Costa Rican Legislators Visit, Meet Deputies

FL281928 Havana Tele-Rebelde Network in Spanish 1700 GMT 28 Mar 88

[Text] A delegation of Costa Rican legislators visiting our country has held talks with Cuban deputies. The parliamentarians exchanged views on the structure and functioning of the people's government organs in Cuba and came out in favor of a greater rapprochement between the two nations. Antonio Tacsan Lam, head of the Costa Rican delegation and first secretary of the legislative assembly, noted that Cuban reality is not always reported favorably in the foreign press.

During their stay in Cuba, the legislators will visit places of historical and general interest. This morning, the delegation laid a wreath at the foot of the monument to our national hero, Jose Marti. The legislators will also meet with leaders of the central state administration and tour Santiago de Cuba Province.

Meet Vice Foreign Minister

FL291311 Havana Tele-Rebelde Network in Spanish 1100 GMT 29 Mar 88

[Text] The delegation of Costa Rican parliamentarians headed by Antonio Tacsan Lam, first secretary of the legislative assembly, has met with Cuban Vice Foreign Minister Miguel Brugueras. Brugueras explained to the visitors that Cuba's foreign policy is a dynamic one and seeks to establish diplomatic ties with other regions of the world.

They also talked about Cuba's social and economic development, as well as the situation in Central America, Oscar Arias' peace plan, and Cuba's view of Latin America as an integrated political unit.

Officials Deliver Castro Message to Mugabe

FL281054 Havana Radio Progreso Network in Spanish 1100 GMT 26 Mar 88

[Text] Zimbabwean President Robert Mugabe received two Cuban officials in Harare yesterday. The officials delivered a message from Commander in Chief Fidel Castro.

It was reported that the message refers to the confrontation between FAPLA [People's Armed Forces for the Liberation of Angola] and Cuban internationalist troops and Pretoria's escalating aggression. Mugabe said that the battles the Cubans are fighting together with the Angolans symbolize the materialization of the Frontline States' will to struggle against the racist regime of Pretoria.

The Cuban delegates arrived in Harare from Lusaka, where they delivered a message from Fidel to the Zambian leader, Kenneth Kaunda.

IAPA-Style Freedom of Speech Rejected

FL292034 Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 1700 GMT 29 Mar 88

[Station commentary]

[Text] The Inter-American Press Association, IAPA, has once again attacked Cuba. The invocation is the same one that it has been repeating for the past 29 years: that there is no freedom of speech in our country. If it weren't for the variety of shadings the matter has acquired in the course of time, this insipid harping would be of little interest.

However, the much-publicized IAPA is now more discreet. It tries to mask its true designs a little better. It tries to earn some respect by covering its anatomy as the imperial whore with a cloak of truculent objectivity. Who is IAPA fooling? This freak created by the empire fools no one in the hemisphere today, with the exception of those who want to be fooled or who need to be fooled.

IAPA talks about the absence of freedom of speech in Cuba. Well, let us state clearly that we do not have nor do we want freedom of speech or any other kind of capitalist-style freedom in this country. The imperial whore should stop obstinately trying to pigeonhole us into the concept of freedom held by their masters. They'd better realize that we live in socialism here and that the Cuban revolution represents a different kind of freedom on this continent. It is firmly built on different values, on a new style. As long as inequality exists in the world—that is, the class struggle—freedom for us will develop in terms of the interests of those who practice the exercise of power. Here in Cuba, that power is wielded by the workers; therefore, freedom is theirs.

In the nations so well represented by IAPA, power is held by the rich. Consequently, they are the ones who enjoy the freedom of the powerful. Generalities just won't do on this essential point. So, let's forget cheap rhetoric and IAPA-style gossip. To harp on it is to be out of step with the times or, in the best of cases, to crawl into a grotesque lap no longer in fashion.

British Virgin Islands

United Party Chief Named New Opposition Leader

FL292108 Bridgetown CANA in English 1434 GMT 23 Mar 88

[Text] Tortola, British Virgin Islands, March 23, CANA—Governor Mark Herdman has named Conrad Maduro as the new leader of the opposition in the British Virgin Legislative Council.

Maduro, leader of the British Virgin Island's United Party, replaces Ralph O'Neal, who crossed the floor last week to become deputy chief minister and minister of natural resources and labour. O'Neal replaced Omar Hodge, who was sacked by Chief Minister Lavity Stoutt.

O'Neal submitted his resignation as leader of the opposition following his ministerial appointment. He is also expected to step down from the Hotel and Commerce Association. He was unanimously re-elected for a second term at the annual general meeting early February.

A spokesman for the association said an extra-ordinary general meeting is to be held late April or early May to elect a new chairman. The new opposition leader is a former minister of natural resources and labour and has held ministerial appointments in previous administrations.

As leader of the opposition, Maduro will also chair the Public Accounts Committee in the legislature of this British colony. The committee reviews the accounts of government and reports to the Legislative Council on excesses or unauthorized expenditure, revenue shortfalls or apparent extravagance.

Dominican Republic

'Biggest Cocaine Trafficker' Arrested

PA291704 Madrid EFE in Spanish 1604 GMT 29 Mar 88

[Text] Santo Domingo, 29 Mar (EFE)—Victor Penson, described by National Police Chief Major General Aristides Sanchez Aybar as the biggest cocaine trafficker in the Dominican Republic, was arrested yesterday in this capital city.

Sanchez Aybar said that Penson led an international band of drug traffickers and that he fled to the United States when he realized he could not operate in the country. Penson later returned to the country.

Gen Sanchez said that drug enforcement officers arrested Penson in "Naco," a residential neighborhood in Santo Domingo.

At an event at which 12 kg of cocaine, 11 kg of marijuana, and several other drugs were burned, Gen Sanchez Aybar said that Penson had been running from the police since 1986.

Haiti

Konakom Notes Violations of Constitution

FL290225 Port-au-Prince Radio Metropole in Creole 1700 GMT 28 Mar 88

[Excerpts] Konakom [National Committee of the Congress of Democratic Movements] leaders held a news conference this morning on the occasion of the 1st anniversary of the Constitution of 1987. [passage omitted]

They drew up a balance sheet regarding how the Constitution has been applied in Haiti, and said they had noted more than 20 violations of the Constitution. [passage omitted]

Konakom said the Haitian people must remobilize at this time to make the government apply the Constitution. They noted that there is a kind of fear reigning in Haiti at present, referring to the business of searches.

The Konakom people said they felt the current searches being effected were illegal, and not at all in keeping with the Constitution, even though a justice of the peace accompanied the military while they carried out searches.

Mr Victor Benoit spoke, saying that in terms of the political situation, these searches scared him and all democrats, because this is how Duvalier had started. [passage omitted]

Konakom said the Haitian people should mobilize to demand an explanation regarding the matter of searches of people's houses being effected every night in Haiti, especially in Port-au-Prince.

Konakom stated that the Constitution is a legal means of struggle for change and the Haitian people should get to work, remobilize, and reform their organizations, in order to ensure that the Constitution is applied. [passage omitted]

Protest on Gonaives Toxic Waste Incident Urged

FL300030 Port-au-Prince Radio Soleil Network in Creole 1200 GMT 29 Mar 88

[Excerpts] On the occasion of the 1st anniversary of the Constitution of 1987, Rockefeller Guerre's UPN [Union of Nationalistic Patriots] says it is with an aching heart that the UPN salutes the anniversary of the Constitution. [passage omitted]

If we are suffering greatly today, it is not because we ratified the Constitution but because the authorities continue to violate it. We will not waste our time listing all the violations but the UPN thinks it is important to highlight the matter of the toxic waste the "Khian Sea" dumped on the SEDREN [expansion unknown] wharf in Gonaives. [passage omitted]

Despite the fact the Constitution is clear on this matter, we are hearing a lot of talk from many demagogues who are calling for many analyses of the waste before any action is taken against the guilty parties. UPN says it thinks this is because they are afraid to shoulder their responsibilities, since they know who they are up against.

UPN says that if the deputies want to be respected by the people and by history, it thinks they should call (?the authorities) before a committee that is unafraid to find out what happened.

UPN continues in its press release: We are not counting on the senators because it looks like they have a little problem among themselves. But we are expecting the deputies to show that they are no one's flunkies.

Regarding the demonstration the Gonaives authorities prevented on Friday, 25 March, UPN says it would like to ask the government, which says it wants a democracy, if it was responsible for ordering that the people of Gonaives be muzzled in this way. UPN would also like to hear what the deputy from Gonaives has to say about this matter. Is he going to call the authorities before the Chamber of Deputies to demand an explanation of the slap in the face they gave the people of Gonaives, or is he going to let them muzzle all Haitian people?

UPN asks all organizations to get together to take concrete action to ensure respect for the nation's Constitution, to stop defending the Constitution only with words and press releases. UPN says the slaves did not seize their freedom by issuing press releases, nor was that how Martin Luther King helped American blacks get their civil and political rights.

For this reason, says UPN, it deeply regrets that the youth of Gonaives did not take to the streets just because the commander said he would not provide protection. According to UPN, this is BS.

UPN, which is not in favor of violence, thinks that if the Haitian people do not resign themselves to defending their rights; if they are afraid of tear gas; if they are afraid of getting beaten; if they continue saying, as was the case under Duvalier, it is better to look bad but survive; if the Haitian people are afraid of dying, the authorities will continue trampling the poor underfoot and the macoutes will continue slapping the Haitian people in the face.

UPN says it thinks the organizations defending the Constitution should get together with all the other peoples' organizations and organize a demonstration to protest what was just done in Gonaives because if we don't show them how much weight we pull, we'll be sorry later.

The eve of a festival gives you an idea of how the festival will turn out. If today the government doesn't want demonstrations to be held, tomorrow we won't even be able to issue press releases.

The UPN asks the Haitian people to have the courage to struggle until the gazebo is destroyed in order to ensure that the nation's Constitution is respected, and so that we won't have to accept another dictator, even if 1988 was tougher than 1957.

This was a press release issued by Rockefeller Guerre's UPN on the occasion of the 1st anniversary of the Constitution ratified by the people on 29 March 1987.

Petit Goave Welcomes Returning Priests

FL290315 Port-au-Prince Radio Nationale in Creole 1400 GMT 28 Mar 88

[Excerpts] This Saturday was a really festive day in Petit Goave because Father (Boucicault) and Father Crispin, who had been forced to leave Petit Goave since the 29 November elections, returned to town.

Like the proverb says, the hypocrites were surprised.

The population applauded along both sides of the street. Also, people on foot and on bicycles, on motorcyles, and in motor vehicles had gone to await the priests at the foot of Morne Tapion to escort them into town.

The police were on the scene during this crowded event, providing adequate security. People are very happy now in Petit Goave, because while the priests were gone, when people wanted to get married or someone had to be baptized, the people had to go to the coast to see if some other parish would accept them. [passage omitted]

Msgr Ligonde accompanied Father (Boucicault) and Father Crispin. [passage omitted]

Trinidad and Tobago

Robinson Explains Ministers' Dismissals

FL300225 Bridgetown CANA in English 2134 GMT 28 Mar 88

[Text] Port-of-Spain, Trinidad, March 28, CANA—Trinidad and Tobago Prime Minister A.N.R. Robinson has cited violation of the oath of office, misrepresenting cabinet decisions and inciting disaffection among the 10 reasons for his dismissal of three ministers last month. The reasons were listed in a bland one-page hand-out he circulated at Sunday's National Council session of the ruling National Alliance for Reconstruction (NAR). It was the first time Robinson explained his February 8 dismissal of the three, including outspoken NAR deputy political leader, Basdeo Panday.

The list, headed office of the political leader and dated March 27, was handed out just before the 221-member council was to vote on possible reinstatement of Panday, as a forerunner to efforts to reconcile warring factions within the 15-month government.

The council voted against reinstatement, put off reconciliation talks until a later date, and instead set up a tribunal to investigate and frame charges of indiscipline against those persons dismissed.

Robinson's handout simply accused the ministers of 1. Being in breach of and/or in disrespect of the Constitution; 2. Violating the oath of office; 3. Activities incompatible with the obligations of ministers of government; 4. Actions calculated to bring the government into disrepute; 5. Doing calculable damage to the country's image; 6. Misrepresenting decisions of the cabinet; 7. Inciting disaffection; 8. Blaming (cabinet) colleagues for their own deficiencies and failures; 9. Placing parochial and sectional interests above the interests of the nation; and 10. Failing to heed warnings of unacceptable behaviour in office as minister.

Robinson had been mandated by the NAR to explain the dismissals within seven days of the council accepting an internal report that examined party problems.

The council decided to hear, investigate and frame any necessary disciplinary charges against those whose actions of indiscipline could be seen as being inimical to the interests of the party.

On Monday, chairman of the new disciplinary tribuna' junior legal affairs minister, Anthony Smart, told CANA he was still waiting for the terms of reference on his work. The committee, mandated to report to the national executive in 21 days, is yet to state whether all the party's leaders would be subject to investigation by the tribunal.

De la Madrid Speaks on Economic Solidarity Pact

PA291422 Mexico City Red Nacional 13 Imevision Television in Spanish 0130 GMT 28 Mar 88

[Speech by President Miguel de la Madrid at Los Pinos Presidential Palace in Mexico City on 27 March—recorded]

[Text] Ladies and gentlemen: We must say, 3 and 1/2 months after signing the Economic Solidarity Pact, that its principal goal—the reduction of inflation—has satisfactorily been met. This has been achieved thanks to the fact that the signatories and the government have substantially done their share. There has been a partial lack of compliance, but this has not affected the intended results. Inflation, which was 14.5 [percent] in December and 15.5 in January of this year, dropped to approximately 8.5 in February. March is showing a downward trend.

A reduction in inflation can be seen. During the first half of March, consumer prices increased by 2.9 percent compared with the preceding 2-week period. The information we have available to date helps us to predict that during the 2d week in March, consumer prices will increase by about 1.5 [percent]. Inflation for this current 2-week period in March is equivalent to a monthly rate of 3 percent. This means that for the last 2 weeks in March, we will have an inflation rate approximately one-fifth of what we had in January.

The price index for basic foods—which is the index that has served basically to measure inflation, especially that which affects the majority of the population—will increase in March by slightly less than 3 percent. To a great extent, this increase, as we had predicted, can be explained by the statistical lag at the end of February in food price increases.

Within the context of financial markets, we should emphasize the significant reduction in interest rates for this month. This reduction is due to the lowering of inflation and the favorable impact this has had on the supply and demand of financial resources. A drop in interest rates will soon reduce loan rates. This, in turn, will lower production costs and the amount for servicing the public debt, which will also increase inflation's downward trend. We must stress that by lowering inflation, the nominal drop in interest rates will result in a positive balance for those with savings.

Everything seems to indicate that we have begun to break the vicious cycle of inflation, which we have called inflationary inertia, and which is produced at a given time and becomes self-perpetuating. In accordance with the forecast of the original program, the fiscal deficit and credit restrictions have contributed to strengthening our balance of payments while, at the same time, the exchange policy has helped to reduce inflationary pressures. Undoubtedly, strengthening the balance of payments and maintaining a good level of international reserves at the Bank of Mexico have increased the effectiveness of the struggle against inflation.

Based on an analysis of the evolution and results of the various components of the Economic Solidarity Pact, several sectors recently held a dialogue with the government and reiterated their determination—already evident 1 month ago—to deepen the struggle against inflation. It is great to find out that the sectors have found it opportune and advisable to extend the license of this new stage of the pact to April and May. The government of the republic is pleased to accept this decision, which will allow the introduction of greater positive elements to producers, merchants, and consumers in their respective divisions, and which will allow us to better fight the inflationary inertia.

We should feel pleased with the achievements realized to date. At the same time, we must admit that the task ahead will be difficult and complex. Given the levels of inflation we have experienced, we cannot take for granted the continued reduction of inflation as a result of what we have done so far. We have to do more. We must permanently and closely monitor the evolution of the national economy, and particularly prices. The government of the republic is planning to do so, and hereby reiterates its determination to strictly comply with its part of the pact, by redoubling its efforts to strengthen public finances, particularly with regard to the national budget.

We are observing a drop in the inflation rate, and this obliges us to continue adjusting the nominal budget. Otherwise, the expenses might cause an imbalance in public finances or at least prevent our reaching the goals we have set, goals that we know are an essential and decisive part of the success of the pact.

Producers, merchants, and those providing services must strengthen their contributions to this national effort by setting prices for April and May in such a way that they will not reduce the levels in effect today. We hope that those who have not complied with what was established in the pact will do so now, following the example given by most of the nation's enterprises. I insist that the government of the republic will persuade, as much as possible, but it will also comply with its commitments to the other parties of the pact in such a way that if there are any deviations, the necessary measures will be applied.

It is not fair that a minority can ruin what the majority is doing with so much solidarity and sacrifice. With this in mind, the evaluation and follow-up committee of the pact will continue meeting frequently and will be in contact with the workers, peasants, and businessmen in order to carefully observe the behavior of prices. In this manner, the committee will also explain any measures that the government of the republic may have to take.

Briefs

Mining Production Figures

National mining production grew 6.3 percent during 1987, nearly double the figure for 1986, according to Jesus Perez Martinez, Guadalajara delegate for the

Secretariat of Energy, Mines and Parastatal Industry. Copper and sulfur extractions increased by 33.4 and 13.1 percent, respectively. Perez Martinez said copper extraction was outstanding in mines located in the states of Sonora and Zacatecas, where 94.2 percent of the country's total mining production is concentrated. Steel production is one of Jalisco's main activities, with monthly extractions averaging 78,000 tons. [Summary] [*PA260421 Mexico City EXCELSIOR (EN LOS ESTADOS Supplement) in Spanish 18 Mar 88 p 2*]

El Salvador

FMLN Claims Damaging Reconnaissance Helicopter

PA300313 (Clandestine) Radio Venceremos in Spanish to El Salvador 0009 GMT 30 Mar 88

[Text] The FMLN has damaged a reconnaissance helicopter of the enemy Air Force in Perquin, Morazan Department. Early this morning, 29 March, the Duarte Armed Forces High Command landed some paratroopers on Perquin Hill to prevent our delivering a war-wounded person to the International Red Cross. Later, in the afternoon, our forces attacked the paratroopers, who were forced to hasten their withdrawal from the northern area of Morazan. They used several helicopter gunships and a reconnaissance helicopter. The troops hastily boarded the Air Force helicopters in the midst of our fighters' cross-fire.

Attention: At 1515 today, 29 March, a reconnaissance helicopter participating in the hasty evacuation of the enemy troops from Perquin was hit by our antiaircraft units and was damaged. At 1515 today, 29 March, the reconnaissance helicopter was hit by our antiaircraft units and damaged in Perquin. Our fighters confirm that a reconnaissance helicopter was damaged in Perquin. This is the fourth helicopter we have damaged during the month of March.

Honduras

Azcona on French Agreement, Nicaragua Talks

PA300150 Tegucigalpa Voz de Honduras Network in Spanish 1120 GMT 29 Mar 88

[Report by Julio Armando Valdez]

[Excerpts] The government, through the Finance Ministry, has signed a new loan agreement for development projects. The agreement was signed by President Jose Azcona Hoyo, the French ambassador, and officials from the French national credit bank and the National Bank of Paris. The loan agreement is for a total of 25 million lempiras and is to be used in infrastructure works and to resolve the water scarcity crisis in Tegucigalpa. President Azcona thanked the banking institutions:

[Begin Azcona recording] I thank the National Bank of Paris, the [words indistinct] French for foreign trade, and the rest of the banks that are making possible the signature of this convention, which will enable us to improve Tegucigalpa's water supply system.

As we all know and as the ambassador explained, the Tegucigalpa water problem is very serious. Tegucigalpa has exorbitant population growth—for more than 20 years we have had annual growth of more than 5 percent—which has made the problem almost impossible to resolve. We want to thank you; your great country, France; and the French banks involved in extending these loans, because they are going to make a contribution that, even if it does not resolve the Tegucigalpa water problem totally, will improve the per capita water supply.

In conclusion, I want to state that we will make it our concern to resolve the delays in complying with the convention of [words indistinct], in paying our construction allotment so projects can be completed, and in complying with the other conventions that have been signed.

As for the airport, we have decided to go with the main construction, because it will not require further technical designs. For example, the landing strip structure, land movements, geological studies, and [words indistinct] have advanced greatly. However, we will need technical support to design the airport operation and, of course, navigation departures specified in the convention that includes [words indistinct] will be used in the new airport. [end recording]

We interviewed President Azcona after the ceremony for the signing of the 25-million-lempira agreement:

[Begin recording] [Passage omitted] [Reporter] Would you give us your opinion on the dialogue held between the contras and the Sandinist government?

[Azcona] We favor dialogue and peace. If Nicaraguans reach an agreement and war is stopped in that country, we will be the first to reap benefits. We are very tired of Nicaraguan problems always ending up affecting Honduras. We are very tired of this and of the position taken by many Hondurans who, instead of noting the situation in Nicaragua and supporting solutions to this conflict, blame the Honduran Government for Nicaragua's domestic situation. We have nothing to do with this situation. We are getting tired of the Nicaraguan situation. Let them open their jails, let them hold talks, let them sign agreements, let them do whatever is necessary to leave us alone.

[Reporter] We have received information that your government was pressured into bringing U.S. troops.

[Azcona] We have acted for the benefit of Hondurans and national security. [passage omitted] [end recording]

Communist Party Leader on U.S. Troop Presence

PA292250 Havana International Service in Spanish 2300 GMT 26 Mar 88

[Statement by Rigoberto Padilla Rush, secretary general of the Communist Party of Honduras; date, place not given—recorded]

[Excerpt] Our party has been warning our people that this would happen, that we would have this intolerable situation of being a country occupied by a foreign military force—in this case, the United States. Honduras

has lost its ability to make decisions. The regime only yields to Washington's orders. Under the current Reagan administration, the White House is carrying out several aspects of a policy of war and aggression.

Political crises occur frequently, and become worse as they affect the political situation throughout the region. This is easy to understand, because Honduras is a key factor in the interventionist policy within the aggressive escalation by Washington against Nicaragua and El Salvador. Because of its geographic location, Honduras has become the epicenter of social and political turmoil resulting from the White House's aggressive behavior. It also hurls us into situations that humiliate us before the rest of the world, and commit even more our own independence and security. [passage omitted]

Nicaragua

Ortega Comments on Sapoa Talks, U.S. Policy

PA292010 Managua Domestic Service in Spanish 1622 GMT 29 Mar 88

[Speech by President Daniel Ortega at ceremony honoring U.S. citizen Brian Willson at the Cesar Augusto Silva Convention Center in Managua—live]

[Text] For the past century, our people have been confronted with the aggressive, expansionist, imperialist policies implemented by various U.S. administrations. For the past century, too, the Nicaraguan people have enjoyed the solidarity of the U.S. people, who have rejected these aggressive, interventionist, and meddling policies.

With us today is Brian Willson, an American who represents the feelings of the American people, feelings of peace, justice, and a true love of democracy. Democracy begins by respecting others; it begins by one nation respecting another; and Brian Willson has defended and is still defending those principles. He has opposed the illegal, dirty war condemned by the International Court of Justice, which the United States has been waging against Nicaragua.

Brian Willson has acted in favor of peace and friendship between the U.S. Government and people and the Nicaraguan Government and people. Willson is with us once again, but today he shares with us his legs, which were destroyed by the aggressive U.S. policies. He had visited Nicaragua before, touring our roads in the war zones, his legs keeping in step with those of our peasants. Today he is here once again, with his usual morale and strength, because his legs were torn up, but his convictions were not. His legs were torn up, but his spirit was not. His legs were torn up, but his morale was not, and he is an example of U.S. heroism and dignity.

Willson is in our fatherland precisely at the time when we are continuing the negotiations in Sapoa, in this struggle for peace that together the Nicaraguan and U.S. people have been trying to achieve. Efforts in favor of peace are under way in Sapoa, but I do not doubt that the U.S. Government is still trying to hinder progress in Sapoa so that peace cannot become a reality. The attitude and proposals of the counterrevolutionary delegation in Sapoa are clearly dilatory efforts to gain time so the U.S. Congress can approve funds for the mercenary forces to enable the war can continue.

The agreement was that this meeting was to begin yesterday at 0900; instead, it began at 1500. The Nicaraguan Government delegation was at Sapoa at 0900. The counterrevolutionary delegation appeared in Sapoa at 1500. We had agreed that today's meeting would begin at 0900, but the counterrevolutionaries appeared at 1000. They are trying to prolong the discussion of specific points agreed to in Sapoa on 23 March. They are trying to delay the discussion of the zones: where they will be located, how large they will be, and the modus operandi in those zones; in other words, how food will be taken to those areas while they are there, how they are going to get around in those zones, and all those specific points.

Our delegation has gone there prepared to discuss the topic until an agreement is reached, either today or tomorrow, or whenever. Our delegation is prepared to stay in Sapoa until a concrete, specific agreement is reached. To try to suspend the Sapoa meeting and continue it at another time and place would be violating the agreement that was signed so recently, on 23 March in Sapoa.

We urge the contra leaders who signed the agreements to abide by them. We urge the contra delegation in Sapoa to not allow themselves to be swept away by the Reagan administration policy and hope that we do not leave Sapoa today, tomorrow, or the day after without having reached a specific agreement on the areas and modus operandi. We would then have the meeting on 6 April here in Managua to discuss other topics related to the definitive cease-fire.

The U.S. Congress and Administration must also be very clear regarding their responsibility. In the same way that they can contribute to peace, they can also contribute to the continuation of the war and to the end of the Sapoa agreements. The Reagan administration is making an effort to obtain logistical support for the mercenaries. It is making an effort to have what it calls humanitarian aid transferred to Honduras and managed by the CIA. It is making an effort to see that a door is left open for expeditious military aid for the mercenary groups. We hope the U.S. Congress will not yield to this effort or to this pressure, because if it does, it will be negating the Sapoa agreements by its actions. In Sapoa, the Nicaraguan Government and the counterrevolutionary leaders agreed to a very clear point. Both sides agreed that only humanitarian aid is acceptable, and exclusively under the terms of the Esquipulas agreement.

In other words, the Esquipulas agreement is very clear on the subject of humanitarian aid. It provides that this aid must be channeled through humanitarian organizations, and it should be food, medicine, or means for the settlement or resettlement of the people involved in the peace process.

In no way does the Esquipulas agreement provide for logistical assistance: uniforms, boots, or supplies. Nothing of the sort. If they need clothing, civilian—not military—clothing will be sent to them. Food and clothing will be sent to them. This is specifically mentioned in the Esquipulas agreements. That is what the Nicaraguan Government and the contra leadership agreed to on 23 March. We therefore demand that the U.S. Government, the U.S. Congress, and the U.S. President respect those agreements, which were signed by Nicaraguans. In the end, we cannot deny that the contra leaders who signed the agreement are Nicaraguans.

The members of that irregular force signed an agreement with the Nicaraguan Government, and they themselves have agreed that what is specified in the Esquipulas agreements is the only kind of aid that can promote and reinforce a peaceful solution in our fatherland.

The behavior of the U.S. Congress, and particularly President Reagan's behavior, in the next few days will be decisive in determining whether peace will become a reality in Nicaragua or whether the war and its sequel of death, destruction, and sorrow for the Nicaraguan people will prevail. We will continue to struggle for peace, and we have said Sapoa opens the door to peace. Sapoa in itself is not peace, but it does open the door to peace, a peace the Nicaraguan people have been struggling for.

Today, accompanied by Brian Willson, we once again wish to reiterate the Nicaraguan Government's willingness to carry out direct, bilateral talks with the U.S. Government on security issues. We hope President Reagan will keep his word. He has repeatedly said that the day the Sandinists sat down to negotiate directly with the contras, the U.S. Government would sit down and negotiate directly with the Sandinists. What is President Reagan waiting for to keep his word? Is he or is he not a man of his word? We hope President Reagan is a man of his word and that he will keep his word immediately. We hope he will agree to hold bilateral talks with Nicaragua to discuss security issues that may be bothering the United States and security issues that may be bothering Nicaragua.

Logically, we are not going to discuss Nicaragua's concept of a democratic regime or the United States' concept of a democratic regime. We are going to discuss those issues that will allow us to normalize relations between Nicaragua and the United States. We do not want the United States to keep promoting wars and acting illegally, as it has done in the past and continues to do today.

We have gathered here this morning to pay tribute to our brother Brian Willson and to present to him, on behalf of the Nicaraguan people, the Augusto Cesar Sandino Order. It would seem somewhat contradictory that we are presenting the Augusto Cesar Sandino Order to a U.S. citizen. Augusto Cesar Sandino was always known as a firm anti-imperialist. But as I said earlier, throughout our history there have always been Brian Willsons who have opposed the unjust actions of the U.S. Government, of the various U.S. Governments, against the Nicaraguan people. There have always been Brian Willsons in the United States who have condemned those warmongering policies. There were Brian Willsons when William Walker and his expansionist policy came to Nicaragua in the past century; there were Brian Willsons during the early part of this century when U.S. troops invaded our homeland; there were Brian Willsons when Sandino fought and defeated the U.S. military invasion of our territory. Throughout these years, when the Nicaraguan people were fighting the U.S. Government's illegal, unjust policy, the Brian Willsons multiplied throughout the United States. U.S. citizens like Brian Willson have risked their lives for this struggle in the United States, just as many other U.S. citizens have risked their lives here in our homeland. Many U.S. citizens have died here in our homeland, U.S. citizens like Benjamin Linder, who was murdered because of President Reagan's policy. Men like Brian Willson have become well known because they have been able to mobilize the U.S. people with their peaceful actions. The brutality of the U.S. Government, the so-called democracy of the United States, has also become well known because of men like Brian Willson.

During these past few days, when U.S. troops were deployed to Honduras, thousands of Americans were mobilized in the cities. The famous U.S. democracy was again exposed. It was exposed in the same brutal way in which the people are repressed when they protest, in the same brutal way in which the American people were repressed in the 1960's during the struggle for blacks' civil rights, and in the same brutal way in which the American people were repressed when they protested against the Vietnam War. We have watched democracy in action on U.S. television. We watched the U.S. police brutality. We watched as the police beat and handcuffed U.S. citizens simply for peacefully protesting in the streets of U.S. cities.

They were unarmed people; they were peaceful people; they were minors who were repressed in the most brutal way, in an open violation of the U.S. people's rights.

Brian Willson is the expression of the dignity and firmness of the U.S. people who are not intimidated in the face of this type of repression.

Brian Willson also exposed the extent of the extreme brutality of the U.S. policy when he was attacked. They thought he was going to flee or move back; however,

Willson, together with the U.S. people, were linked to the strength of our people, peasants, laborers, youths, and women. Brian Willson did not move.

The criticism to Reagan's policy has been very clear. The heroism of the U.S. people has also been very clear. No one can doubt that in the face of these actions, these heroic deeds, it is impossible to defeat this cause and this struggle for peace.

As small as Nicaragua may be, our force and strength are not military. It is not measured as to who has the weapons or who has atomic weapons. Our force and strength is moral. Our force and strength is multiplied in U.S. society and people just as it is multiplied in the peoples of Latin America and the Caribbean and the peoples of the developing and the developed nations.

For this reason, we trust and are certain that peace, sooner or later, will be a reality in Nicaragua. It will be the work of the Nicaraguans, the Americans, and humankind.

This morning, on behalf of the Nicaraguan people, the workers, the laborers, the peasants, and the fighters who have had their legs or other parts of their bodies mutilated in this war imposed by the United States, we are going to bestow the Sandino Order on Brian Willson. It is the order of that man who did not fight the U.S. people but the bad policies of U.S. leaders. We are going to bestow this order on a hero of peace. This is what Brian Willson is: a hero of peace. When we pin this order on his chest, we will be pinning it on the U.S. people, Benjamin Linder, the U.S. brothers who have been working in war zones in our country for years, and the cause of peace, which is the cause of love. Thank you. [applause]

BARRICADA Editorial on Sapoa Agreements

PA291539 Managua BARRICADA (Special Extra Edition) in Spanish 24 Mar 88 pp 1, 2

[Editorial: "We Need To Deal a Final Blow to Yankee Warmongering"]

[Text] The signing of the Sapoa agreements by the Nicaraguan Government and the counterrevolutionary leadership may well go down in history as the crowning achievement in the defeat of U.S. imperialism's policy of using force to destroy the Sandinist revolution.

The Reagan administration had been organizing, maintaining, and using the counterrevolutionary forces as spearheads of its military plans, because of the impossibility of buying Nicaraguans' political will.

The umbilical cord that has fed the Yankee warmongering policy against Nicaragua has practically been severed at Sapoa. The first step has been taken with the signing of the agreements and the end of military operations.

This first step will be followed by the concentration of counterrevolutionary forces in the locations that will be agreed upon. From there, and with all the proper guarantees, they will lay down arms and will return to civilian life in due course. They will be able to join national political life within the country's constitutional and legal framework.

With Yankee logistical support no longer fanning the war, the Nicaraguan Government has established full guarantees so that the forces in the process of laying down arms and returning to civilian life may receive, from neutral organizations and institutions, the food, medicine, and other supplies they need.

This means the Reagan administration no longer has any pretext to request additional financing for its warmongering purposes.

The signing of the agreements takes place at the height of the revolution's political strength, a strength rooted in the firmness and military capabilities of the people. This contrasts with the height of the discrediting and weakening of Reagan's political and military policies. He is unable to counter the actions of the Democrats and is facing an electoral process that gives him no maneuvering room.

This achievement [the signing of the agreements] is nothing more than the result of the heroic struggle and resistance of the Nicaraguan people on all fronts for more than 6 years and, above all, it is the result of the development of Nicaragua's strength and military effectiveness in defending its national sovereignty.

With the Sapoa agreements, not only an agenda for peace is being imposed on the Reagan administration; it is also being offered a solution to ensure that its successors will not inherit this war, and will allow the U.S. Administration to start a new kind of policy and relationship based on mutual respect. With this in mind, the Nicaraguan Government is urging the White House to also sign the Sapoa agreements to normalize Nicaraguan-U.S. relations.

However, youths, laborers, peasants, and mothers must continue to assume their decisive roles as determinant and important factors, which have been effective all these years because the task of defending the revolution is not over; it is just beginning.

For the time being, all people must carry out mobilization tasks to achieve the full dismantling of the Yankee plan to destroy the revolution through military means. The permanent mobilization of the people will ensure compliance with the agreements and will ensure that Reagan and the contras will comply.

At the same time, we must make preparations to adopt other forms of struggle to defend the people's achievements. The struggle in the social, political, and ideological spheres will enter a new phase in which the same

moral combativeness shown in the military area must be transferred to the areas of knowledge, agility, and strength, which are demanded by the new conditions of the struggle.

Panama

Closing Session of 'Solidarity' Conference

Noriega Speaks

PA300240 Panama City Domestic Service in Spanish 2340 GMT 29 Mar 88

[Speech by General Manuel Antonio Noriega, commander of the Panama Defense Forces (FDP), at the closing session of the "Conference of Solidarity With Panama" at the Atlapa Convention Center in Panama City—live]

[Text] To all brothers who are here present from Antigua, Barbados, Belize, Curacao, Dominica, Grenada, Guadeloupe, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Martinique, Saint Kitts, St Vincent, Venezuela, Tobago, St Lucia, the Dominican Republica, Puerto Rico, Nicaragua, Honduras, Guatemala, El Salvador, Costa Rica, Cuba, Argentina, Colombia, and Trinidad and Tobago: [Crowd shouts: "Present" after each country's name]

Brothers in dignity, it is not one man who has challenged the greatest power, it is Latin American dignity. [applause, chants] Comrades, comrades. [Crowd chants: "Let them tell the truth"] To all comrades, to security, we request that even if they disinform, we should be discreet. We request that you not fall for their provocations, because those provocations are part of the psychological war and aggression against this country.

We are honored with your presence in our land. We are honored to be writing together with you a page in history that will be gathered by Latin American countries and will be placed as a star of victory on all worthy flags of the American Continent. [applause] The countries you represent have been, by history and by evolution, linked to ours previously in the same struggles and battles, in the search for our paths, in the search for our self-determination, in the struggle—in time and space—against colonialist forces that resist death and reincarnate as a savage stab wound in the heart of America. [applause]

Panama is the place where, because of its geographic position, men and women have transitted; where the Caribbean islands, the Caribbean nations, have been present at the construction of the Panama Canal; to where many of them left their ancestors and their lives for the construction of the canal ditch; with which the South American countries have felt identified since Bolivar's liberation struggles; where we have identified actively with Argentina in its struggle to recover the Malvinas.

This validity is not fictitious, and this presence is not coincidental. This validity and presence have a historical meaning that go beyond mere words. They have a historical meaning because we must say or conclude that here in Panama we are waging the last battle against colonialism. [applause, chants] Here in Panama, we are waging a hand-to-hand combat for Latin American dignity. This is the last bastion of Latin American dignity, so do not let it fall; do not let Panama lose this battle. [applause, chants]

Panama has been subjected to a brutal aggression never before recorded in the history of aggressions. All the principles of human law have been violated. Those who want democracy have trampled on it in Panama. Those who cry out for human rights have soiled them in Panama. [applause, chants of "A plane for the seditious ones"]

They have spent over $70 million to spread disinformation, they have spent over $70 million to plot, and they have spent over $70 million to buy the consciences of the traitors and the weak ones. [applause, chants] But with all the gold in the world, with all the money in the world, they have not been able to make this people kneel. [applause] They have not been able to make this commander or these Armed Forces kneel. [applause, chants of "Not one step backward"]

They are used to dealing with colonies; they are used to dealing with slaves. They thought the issue was a man, or a community, or the personal ambitions of a man. This is an issue of dignity; this is an issue of convictions; this is an issue of liberation; this is an issue of Latin America, gentlemen. [applause, chants of "Unity"]

It would have been very nice, very easy, and very calming if this commander had accepted that comfort, that calming action. [shouts of "No," "Never," "Not one step backward" and chants of "Noriega, for sure, let the Yankees have it"]

The FDP was designed by Omar Torrijos Herrera, [applause, chants of "Omar is here"] who at the beginning of the struggle and also following the signing of the treaties replied to the U.S. President: Sir, this note was sent to the wrong address; this abusive, insulting note should have been sent to the governor of an island that is represented by another star in your flag, not to Panama. [applause, shouts]

Gentlemen, still not satisfied... [shouts] Gentlemen, the distinguished friendly delegates must know where the problem began. The problem began in December 3 years ago, when Poindexter, one of the men involved in the Irangate scandal, came to Panama to demand and to order Panama to join a plan to invade Nicaragua. He said Panama and Mexico—as members of the Contadora Group—were obstacles to U.S. policies and plans in Central America. He also said it was necessary for the FDP to lower its tone, because its ideological concept of a low-intensity war was a bad example for the other

armies in the area. When we, together with a young lieutenant who was the official translator, got up indignantly and said no, the threats came, and so did the consequences you already know about.

Not happy with the economic aggression, with the psychological aggression, or with the slanderous attacks that violate specific UN treaties that consider slander and libel against a nation's people as an aggression, they seized the money of the Panamanian people and businessmen in a Machiavellian action considered absolutely legal in the United States but seen as theft in Latin America. [applause, shouts]

Still not satisfied with that, gentlemen, in addition to the insults and threats, today they have brought the battleship "Missouri" with 500 helicopters that are stationed in Fort Rodman. [sentence as heard] This is a vivid threat of their invasion plans. [shouts, applause]

That reminds us of the same specific plans for the invasion of the Dominican Republic, of the historic attack on the Dominican Republic, and of the escalation of the attacks in a desperate attempt—like a cat trying to hide its (?misbehavior)—to cover up their Irangate and to cover up those behind Irangate. Those actions are aimed at distracting the U.S. public; they are aimed at distracting the U.S. youth. [shouts of "Reagan and the CIA, the same crap"] They are trying to sell a fictitious situation in an attempt to justify another Vietnam in Panama. The United States and its soldiers will be able to enter Panama, yes, yes. However, the U.S. mothers will claim their sons, however many they are, however many they are. [repeats himself] [applause, shouts]

Therefore, brothers present here, therefore, worthy delegations here with us today, we ask you to wage the battle here, today, and now along with Panamanians—because this is a battle of dignity; this is a battle for Latin American truth. There is nothing else behind this battle. There are no ideologies or interests behind this. There is Panamanian dignity. That dignity includes the real and specific proclamation that democracy is not what they want to maintain here. They are not trying to keep any special status; they are struggling for a change and the acquisition of power so in 1999 the presence of another uniform different from this one continues in Panama. [chants]

The truth of all this, gentlemen—I wish journalists would tell this truth—is Panama's geographic position and the control of everything south of the Rio Grande from a specific, magnetic [as heard] point.

Therefore, gentlemen, that is Panama's truth. That is the truth of a people who refuse to kneel down. It is the truth of a youth who refuses to be born castrated. [Crowd shouts: "Standing up or die, but never on our knees"; "We were born to defeat, not to be defeated"; "We will resist the aggression"; applause]

We must also remember that the desperate and clumsy policy of the U.S. State Department has led to all kinds of mistakes in our friendly Latin America. They have tried to be enemies and could have written a book titled: "How To Be an Enemey of Latin America." We, on behalf of Panama and the Armed Forces I represent, which belong to the people, which belong to the people, [repeats himself], which were created to evolve along with a process of liberation headed by Torrijos and in the framework of which Torrijos set the date of departure [of U.S. troops from Panama]... [changes thought] In accordance with the generational relay [relevo generacional], we must continue with the plan, which established that the last colonialist stake planted in Panama's bowels will be dug up forever.

Today, we are proving—not by measuring forces, not by measuring forces [repeats himself]—we are proving along with you that not everything is lost on this continent. We are proving that struggles for liberation belong to each people according to their particular circumstances. We are proving that aggression against one place is directly proportional to the security of other places.

Thus, I insist, gentlemen: Do not let Panama fall. Do not let them win in Panama. Do not let this bastion be lost. We are counting on you, on your presence, and on your fervor and dignity. Despite everything, despite the hunger they are submitting it to, and despite the destruction of its international values, the Panamanian people have great capacity. They have something else; they have something else than a need to eat. They need to tell the world: Panama today, or else Latin America goes to hell, gentlemen. [applause]

Declaration Issued

PA300348 Panama City Domestic Service in Spanish 0011 GMT 30 Mar 88

[Declaration issued at the closing ceremony of the "Conference of Solidarity With Panama" at the Atlapa Convention Center in Panama City on 29 March]

[Text] Whereas in the last few months Panama has been experiencing an intervention by the U.S. Government in its domestic affairs through political, economic, and military aggression:

1. In the political field, the United States is trying to deny the right the Panamanian National Assembly has in accordance with the Panamanian Constitution and law to decide on presidential succession.

2. In the economic field, this situation has worsened because the U.S. Government has prevented currency circulation, has frozen funds belonging to the Panamanian people and government, and has imposed a trade embargo.

3. In the military field, in its aggression against Panama, U.S. imperialism concentrated its basic [words indistinct] on the Panama Defense Forces and has discredited the FDP commander in chief. U.S. imperialism has involved weak officers in conspiracies against the FDP at a time when the military is the main support of the decolonization process because of its nationalistic position against aggression and occupation. The FDP has taken upon itself the historic struggles of Torrijism, the Panamanian people's movement, and the salvation of national sovereignty.

The Central American and Caribbean political parties and movements that met at the first solidarity meeting with Panama from 28 to 29 March therefore resolve:

1. To support the decision of the Panamanian people and government to fight U.S. imperialism's political, economic, and military aggression and to support their willingness to expand economic, political, and diplomatic relations with all countries, especially with Third World countries. [applause]

2. To reject the political, economic, and military aggression the U.S. Government is currently imposing on Panama, especially the military aggression, which is being carried out through the mobilization of troops on Panama's Caribbean coast.

3. To advise Panamanian political organizations to begin a dialogue with the participation of all patriotic forces to resolve the current political situation through a purely Panamanian solution.

4. To create national solidarity committees with the Panamanian people and government comprised of the largest political, social, and labor sectors in each of the participating countries.

5. To carry out, through these committees, specific actions of solidarity in each of the participating countries such as demonstrations, meetings, marches, and acts of protest in front of U.S. embassies and diplomatic representations, [applause] as well as actions of solidarity with the struggle of the Panamanian people and government.

The first Central American and Caribbean meeting of solidarity with Panama urges its participants to organize a worldwide solidarity meeting in support of the Panamanian people and government as soon as possible to consolidate the support of all democratic, progressive, nationalist, and revolutionary sectors and to grant Panamanians the continuity of the decolonization process started by General Omar Torrijos Herrera. [applause]

This meeting urges all political parties and participating organizations in the first Central American and Caribbean meeting of solidarity with Panama to carry out activities in memory of the heroic resistance struggle of the Latin American peoples and to link those activities with the Panamanian people's struggle against foreign intervention. [applause]

This meeting urges its participants to give ample publicity to the statements, agreements, and resolutions approved by this meeting in each of the participating countries and at international organizations and forums. Doing so will give the Panamanian cause wide publicity and will grant the Panamanian people the continuity of the progress and decolonization process started by Gen Omar Torrijos.

This meeting demands the fulfillment of the Esquipulas II agreements signed by all the Central American governments, particularly fulfillment by the Salvadoran and Honduran Governments, and demands the Reagan administration recognize the cease-fire agreement the Nicaraguan people are reaching with dignity in search for a peaceful and negotiated solution to the Central American crisis. [applause]

In conclusion, this meeting urges support for the protest called by the Revolutionary Panamenist Party on the upcoming 2d anniversary of the vile bombing of Tripoli, Libya, whose obvious purpose was to try to kill Libyan leader Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi, thus violating international law and peaceful coexistence among peoples. [applause]

Editorial Praises Meeting

PA291557 Panama City CRITICA in Spanish 28 Mar 88 p 4

[Editorial: "Solidarity Conference"]

[Text] Today, in our capital, the first conference of solidarity of Central America and the Caribbean begins.

Great success is expected, because from a simple exchange of ideas in a geographic area this meeting has stirred the interest of all Latin America. Already there are representatives of South and North America on our soil, because these forces asked not to be left out of the dramatic focal point of this tormented region of the continent, where the empire wishes to prolong its eoconomic, political, and cultural domination.

The active presence of all Latin America to contribute to our policies of analysis and in our nationalist struggle is a phenomenon that recalls the 1826 Bolivar ideals, when the liberator Simon Bolivar gathered on our narrow strip of soil the fathers of the militant assembly [anfictionia militante].

We shall learn of the struggles of each people in this high-spirited terrain of struggle through the voices of outstanding parliamentarians and peoples' leaders.

We salute all the movements, personalities, and spokesmen who will be sharing the bread and the water of the Yankee blockade in our unbeaten fatherland, which neither runs away nor surrenders.

Delvalle Urges 'Immediate Action' From U.S.

PA291805 Buenos Aires REUTER in Spanish 1711 GMT 29 Mar 88

[Text] Washington, 29 Mar (REUTER)—Today Panama's ambassador in Washington announced that deposed Panamanian President Eric Arturo Delvalle has asked the United States and other countries to take immediate action to expel Panamanian military leader General Manuel Antonio Noriega.

Delvalle requested "any justified action...to force Noriega out," Ambassador Juan Sosa, who is loyal to Delvalle, told reporters at the Panamanian Embassy.

Church Leaders Urge Noriega To Resign

PA291818 Paris AFP in Spanish 1643 GMT 29 Mar 88

[By special correspondent Isidro Sanchez]

[Excerpts] Panama City, 29 Mar (AFP)—The Panamanian Government has decided to take the offensive in its political struggle with the opposition and, in a direct show of force, on Monday it arrested 44 leaders of the National Civic Crusade, which has led the antigovernment protests for the past 10 months. [passage omitted]

Crusade lawyer Alida Benedetti has said that the 44 opposition leaders are still under arrest. [passage omitted]

For its part, today the church announced that it has asked Noriega to resign to resolve the crisis in Panama.

In a news conference, Bishops Daniel Nunez and Oscar Brown said that a commission, on behalf of the Panamanian Episcopal Conference, met with Noriega on 24 March and asked him to submit his resignation, which the opposition has been demanding since June 1987.

However, the possibility of a dialogue between the government and the opposition, rejected by the opposition "until Noriega leaves," still seems very remote, despite a possible mediation by Archbishop Marcos McGrath, which was accepted by the Panamanian church today.

Mediation by McGrath was proposed on Monday by Costa Rican President Oscar Arias and Spanish Prime Minister Felipe Gonzalez. So far, neither the government nor the opposition have made a statement on this initiative.

In any case, McGrath has been considered in official sectors as just another opponent, while the Crusade harshly criticized the prelate in the past few days for failing to demand Noriega's resignation.

Msgr Brown on Contacts

PA300300 Panama City Televisora Nacional in Spanish 0000 GMT 30 Mar 88

[Text] The initial contacts to establish a national dialogue between the opposition and Manuel Antonio Noriega, chief of the Army, have been made by the Catholic Church, according to a religious spokesman. Panamanian Archbishop Marcos Gregorio McGrath received a proposal from former Costa Rican President Daniel Oduber, former Venezuelan President Carlos Andres Perez, Costa Rican President Oscar Arias, and Spanish Prime Minister Felipe Gonzalez to mediate in the Panamanian conflict. Today Oscar Brown, auxiliary bishop of Panama, said that the mediation between General Noriega and the opposition is to find a peaceful and constructive solution to the crisis. Regarding the progress made to begin the mediation, Msgr Brown said important steps still have to be taken to get the two sides to begin meeting, but the response has been positive.

At the suggestion of the international request, the archbishop has held an initial contact with the interested parties; that is, with Gen Noriega, members of the Civic Crusade, and the opposition parties. The Civic Crusade representatives have responded positively to the mediation. No date has been set for a preliminary meeting, but Msgr Brown said it is very important that this not be delayed. The initial contacts were held yesterday afternoon and today, but we have not been able to obtain official or unofficial details. Msgr Brown said the meeting between the parties in conflict will surely be held in the next few days, because it is urgent to find a solution. He said a proposed agenda is being drafted with very specific aspects of what has to be discussed. When he was questioned by a reporter from this station, Msgr Brown replied:

[Begin recording] [Brown] we called this news conference because we feel the need to advise the people of the church's initiatives concerning this crisis to find peaceful and constructive solutions. There are people who sometimes say the church does not speak out or does not act. We want to demonstrate that the church has not only been speaking out but acting to find a nonviolent, Panamanian, and constructive solution to the crisis encumbering us. In the communique we released, we gave the points, the initiatives, that the church has made in the last few days to try to help find a solution.

[Reporter] What proposal was made this morning?

[Brown] This morning we explained the Episcopal Conference initiative during a meeting with the general to find a solution to the difficulties. [end recording]

Opposition Leaders, Foreign Newsmen Freed

PA291925 Panama City ACAN in Spanish 1846 GMT 29 Mar 88

[Text] Panama City, 29 Mar (ACAN-EFE)—A total of 43 people, including 3 foreign journalists, have been

released by the police today after their arrest during an antigovernment street demonstration and the occupation of a hotel in this city.

Military forces in combat gear Monday "ambushed" a peaceful demonstration called by the National Civic Crusade to demand the dismissal and departure of General Manuel Antonio Noriega, commander in chief of the Panama Defense Forces [FDP].

Alberto Conte, president of the National Journalists Association and member of the Civic Crusade's executive committee, told ACAN-EFE that "over 5,000 demonstrators were ambushed by the FDP."

Hours after the demonstration, FDP forces violently broke into and occupied the Marriott Hotel, the most luxurious hotel in Panama City, and arrested Civic Crusade members as well as many foreign and local newsmen who were waiting for news there.

Several foreign newsmen were released last night. However, other newsmen, some of whom were injured, were held until approximately 1 hour ago.

A total of 37 men and women were held in custody and questioned by troops, who booked all of them.

Those arrested were taken to a police station and transferred during the predawn hours to the Modelo Jail located across the street from the FDP headquarters, where they were held for over 12 hours.

According to some of those released, they were only mistreated in the hotel lobby, where some of them—and even some hotel guests—were beaten with rubber hoses.

The source said that some people are probably being held in other detention centers, but did not elaborate.

Government on 'Confusion' at Marriott Hotel

PA300253 Panama City Televisora Nacional in Spanish 0017 GMT 30 Mar 88

[Text] Today the Ministry of Government and Justice issued a communique pointing out that at 1800 yesterday, law enforcement officials went to the Marriott Hotel to notify some members of the National Civic Crusade that they were under arrest. Those people will be investigated for actions against state security that are clearly specified in the Penal Code.

Unfortunately, there was some confusion at the time, and there was resistance by the hotel security guards and some civilians who have nothing to do with journalism. As a result, some foreign correspondents were beaten or treated roughly. The Ministry of Government and Justice hereby states that despite the excessive disinformation by some correspondents, the Panamanian Government has not decided in any way—nor is it the government's policy—to harass foreign journalists, undermine their freedom of movement, or restrict freedom of expression in any way.

Strike Ends at Cristobal Port, Work Resumes

PA300444 Panama City Domestic Service in Spanish 0419 GMT 30 Mar 88

[Text] Following a meeting between a group of workers with labor union leader Jose Sanchez from Cristobal port, the port workers lifted the strike and decided to go back to work immediately. Normal activities were resumed early this morning at Cristobal port. Cargo is being dispatched from the freighthouse, and the containers are being moved in the container yard. Work has also been resumed at the invoice, verification, and maritime departments.

A committee composed of six workers has been formed to seek a solution together with the central government for cashing the workers checks that were distributed yesterday afternoon. We visited the port a few minutes ago and observed that most of the workers are working at the port.

We urge the workers living in the outskirts of Colon City and those living in Panama City to go to Cristobal port for more information, as work has been resumed and the strike at Cristobal port is over. At 0800 tomorrow, there will be a very important meeting at the port workers union to give more details about the conclusion of the strike so as to continue working for the benefit and progress of the Republic of Panama.

Presence of U.S. Warship 'Act of Provocation'

PA300333 Panama City Televisora Nacional in Spanish 0000 GMT 30 Mar 88

[Text] A U.S. warship has arrived in Panamanian waters as new evidence of aggression by Washington. To give further evidence of its arrogance and provocation against the Panamanian people, today the U.S. Government sent a warship to Panamanian waters. The ship crossed the Panama Canal waters.

It was learned from sources close to the Panamanian Foreign Ministry that the government of President Manuel Solis Palma will send the U.S. authorities a protest note over this new act of provocation by Washington against Panama. These shots filmed by Antonio De Sedas show when the "USS Okinawa" sailed in the area of Gamboa at approximately 1200. Televisora Nacional reporters were photographed from the ship, and U.S. military personnel tried to prevent them from carrying out their journalistic work.

This is the first time in many years [as heard] that a warship has sailed in the Panama Canal waters. The "Okinawa" is carrying 1,800 heavily armed Marines

and 20 helicopter gunships with missiles. This new provocation by the Americans worries the people who fear a massacre by the U.S. warmongering government.

Meanwhile, in Washington, the Pentagon said the "Okinawa" aircraft carrier is on a routine trip that was planned months ago. The ship will anchor at Rodman Naval Base.

Argentina

4 Injured in Buenos Aires Theater Bombings

PY291946 Buenos Aires NOTICIAS ARGENTINAS in Spanish 1835 29 Mar 88

[Text] Buenos Aires, 29 Mar (NA)—Three bombs exploded early this afternoon in three movie theaters in downtown Buenos Aires, injuring two policemen and two civilians.

The bombs were placed in the Atlas, Normandie, and Sarmiento movie theaters on Lavalle Street, which is only open to pedestrians.

Inspector Guillermo Basso, who is in charge of the security operation being conducted following the bombings, reported that "two policemen and two passers-by have been injured."

"We are continuing our investigation to determine if other bombs have been planted nearby," inspector Basso said, without going into detail.

Another source has reported that a fourth bomb was found in a pizza shop located at 800 Lavalle Street.

Today's bombing mark the beginning of a new terrorist method by groups which, as the government has announced, are engaged in a campaign to wreak havoc.

Alfonsin Comments

PY300206 Buenos Aires TELAM in Spanish 0132 GMT 30 Mar 88

[Excerpts] Buenos Aires, 29 Mar (TELAM)—Today President Raul Alfonsin said the sectors that are willing to do their utmost to put an end to democracy, sectors that have already been crushed twice—referring to the acts of insubordination in the Army led by former Lieutenant Colonel Aldo Rico—are to blame for placing bombs today at movie theaters in Buenos Aires.

The head of state described the bombings as acts of terrorism that are the death throes of those who want to prevent what already is a fait accompli: the victory of democracy.

What a horrible thing, what an irritating thing, exclaimed Alfonsin when reporters questioned him upon leaving Government House.

Alfonsin said those who want to put an end to democracy will not achieve their goal, will not have any success.

Alfonsin immediately denied that he is discouraged, as often stated in reports lately.

On the contrary, Alfonsin added, we are convinced Argentina is on the right road to building a country amid peace, liberty, and democracy, and this is a commitment for the president and for the entire Argentine nation, without any exceptions. [passage omitted]

Asked if he regards today's bomb attacks as an escalation of terrorism, the president said: This is terrorism. Look, a public servant—a fireman—today lost one hand and had one eye injured. This is something we all reject.

Asked if these incidents could result in the establishment of a state of siege, Alfonsin said: That measure is not in keeping with my style. If we can avoid it, we will avoid it, but we cannot rule out the possibility of adopting that type of measure.

Asked if he is becoming discouraged, Alfonsin said this is not true and noted that rumors about his psychological condition are just part of the overall campaign now under way.

Alfonsin added: I can assure you that the contrary is true. We continue to firmly maintain our position, convinced that Argentina is on the right course. [passage omitted]

Interior Ministry Communique

PY300136 Buenos Aires DYN in Spanish 2352 GMT 29 Mar 88

[Text] Buenos Aires, 29 Mar (DYN)—Tonight the Interior Ministry repudiated "the criminal actions" committed against three movie theaters in this capital. It also urged the people to "defend the peaceful coexistence we have chosen as our way of life."

These remarks are included in an official communique read by Interior Ministry Secretary Juan Gauna during a news conference at Government House.

The text of the communique reads as follows:

"The Interior Ministry categorically rejects the criminal acts committed this afternoon by people who do not belong to our society. It adds that the necessary measures have been adopted to identify and arrest those responsible for those actions. Other measures have also been adopted to provide security to the nation. The Interior Ministry also stresses the absurdity of these actions at a time when we Argentines are fully exercising our rights: freedom of expression, the right to petition authorities, and the right to express agreement or disagreement."

"The government condemns these acts, reaffirms its decision to govern in freedom and tolerance, and invites the people to defend the peaceful coexistence we have chosen as our way of life."

Mozambican President Meets With Alfonsin

MB300951 Maputo Domestic Service in Portuguese 0800 GMT 30 Mar 88

[Text] Yesterday, President Joaquim Alberto Chissano, who is on an official visit to Argentina, held his first meeting with Argentine President Raul Alfonsin at Casa Rosada, the palace of the Argentine Government.

The Mozambican head of state's visit to that Latin American country began yesterday morning when he placed a wreath at the monument to the liberator [name indistinct] in Buenos Aires.

Yesterday ended with a dinner hosted by President Raul Alfonsin and his wife in honor of President Joaquim Chissano. At the [words indistinct] the Mozambican head of state explained in detail the origins, causes, and effects of armed banditry in Mozambique. In his speech, President Joaquim Chissano stressed the Mozambican Government and people's efforts to defend the fatherland and to rehabilitate the economy.

Chilean Deputy Foreign Minister Arrives

PY301225 Santiago Domestic Service in Spanish 1030 GMT 30 Mar 88

[Excerpt] Chilean Deputy Foreign Minister Brigadier General Ernesto Videla has arrived in Buenos Aires, where he will analyze the relations between Chile and Argentina. At Ezeiza International Airport, Videla was welcomed by Susana Ruiz, Argentine Foreign Ministry under secretary, and Chilean Ambassador to Argentina Sergio Gaete. According to a report datelined Buenos Aires, Videla declined to make any comments to the Argentine journalists. [passage omitted]

4 Admirals To Go Free Under 'Due Obedience' Law

PY292102 Buenos Aires TELAM in Spanish 1729 GMT 29 Mar 88

[Text] Buenos Aires, 29 mar (TELAM)—Concerning the Navy Mechanics School (ESMA) case, involving human rights violations, it leaked out today at the courts that the Supreme Court of Justice has included four indicted admirals in the benefits of the Due Obedience Law, while Admiral Julio Torti, retired, and Admiral Antonio Vanek, retired, will remain under indictment.

Admiral Torti and Admiral Vanek are free now. Orders have reportedly been issued to free the four admirals, whose identities have not been given.

Hector Grossi, the Supreme Court of Justice press director, has reported that the Supreme Court of Justice would release a ruling on the ESMA case after 1600 because the parties involved are being notified of the court action.

Officers Dismissed for 'Irregular' Procedures

PY291730 Buenos Aires TELAM in Spanish 1106 GMT 29 Mar 88

[Text] Buenos Aires 29 Mar (NA)—According to a newspaper report, the Army staff has relieved Quartermaster Oscar Rodolfo Chinni, director of the Army Social Benefits Institute (IOSE), together with six colonels, a lieutenant colonel, and a civilian financial adviser, from their posts for carrying out irregular administrative procedures.

The decision was made as a result of an investigation carried out by Lieutenant Colonel Roberto Uzal, who since mid-1987 has been in charge of the data processing services. He has received death threats, which prompted the investigation within the force.

The following officers were relieved from their posts: General Chinni, who in 1982 was quartermaster of the Argentine forces in the Malvinas Islands war; Colonel Jacinto de Jesus, retired, chief of the Medical Services; Lieutenant Colonel Juan Carlos Hidalgo, chief of the Financial Department; Colonel Hector Alfredo Diaz, retired, Financial Operations chief; Colonel Horacio de la Colina, retired, chief of the Human Resources Department; Colonel Sanmartino, retired, chief of the Planning and Organization Department; Colonel Mario Oscar Tommasi, retired, secretary general; Colonel Germinal Sancinetti, retired, chief of the Pharmacy Department; and accountant Carlos Bavio, economic adviser and chief of the Accounting Department.

This was reported today by the newspaper PAGINA 12, which states that Col Sancinetti, who traveled to the United States last Monday, is allegedly the main culprit.

According to a memo prepared by Lt Col Uzal for the IOSE deputy chief, the IOSE Accounting Department had been concealing information from his data processing department, which is in charge of processing the current accounts of the IOSE, which had actually given the work to a private company.

According to PAGINA 12, Uzal also demanded that the services given by the Bazterrica Clinic to the IOSE be investigated because only half of them had been paid for.

The memo states that the losses of the IOSE "in a single accounting year could reach hundreds of thousands of australes," without the application of the National Accounting Law.

Lt Col Uzal had allegedly sent his first report to the military authorities in September 1987. He reported on irregular procedures by the Matienzo and Central Military Hospital drugstores, from where expensive drugs for treatment of tumors had been stolen.

The memo states that "the IOSE has been paying large sums of money for maintenance services which it never received."

As a result of the investigation, the IOSE deputy director in the past few days refused to pay 39,000 australes for ambulance services, but after an investigation he approved a payment for 9,000 australes.

Another irregular procedure that was found out is the payment of 37,500 australes to the Italian Hospital of Bahia Blanca, which was actually supposed to receive only 37.50 australes.

Gen Chinni was also charged with wrongfully refunding 270,000 australes to a member instead of the 270 australes actually owed him.

Bolivia

Banzer Announces Presidential Candidacy

PY291500 La Paz PRESENCIA in Spanish
24 Mar 88 p 7

[Excerpts] Yesterday General Hugo Banzer Suarez, president of the ADN, officially announced his candidacy for the 1989 general elections. He said that his decision constitutes a request to the people "because I want to dedicate this last stage of my life to serve all Bolivians." [passage omitted]

During a speech commemorating the anniversary of ADN, Banzer said that in 1979, "when we founded the party, we thought we would be small in numbers but large in patriotism and moral standing. The first time we contested the political field we surprised everybody by winning 100,000 votes."

"We continued to grow from that date, and today the ADN has become the largest political party in Bolivia. Our numbers have increased because we have shown ourselves as people with clear ideas, without deceit or lies. This is because we are capable of telling the Bolivian people the truth and do not need to resort to proposals that we know we will not be able to fullfil."

"Our motto is to be honest with the people, and our slogan is: Order, Peace, and Work," Banzer said.

After the speech, Banzer and his party followers toasted their comradeship.

GNP, Public Deficit, Inflation Estimated

PY291752 La Paz PRESENCIA in Spanish
22 Mar 88 p 1

[Excerpts] Acting Finance Minister Ramiro Cabezas and Budget Under Secretary Jaime Coronado have said that the GNP will reach $4.351 billion in 1988.

During a news conference hosted over the weekend, the two officials outlined the performance of the Bolivian economy for the current fiscal year, explaining that the overall public deficit will be 3 percent of the GNP. [passage omitted]

The deficit will be financed with net foreign credits (disbursements minus amortization). [passage omitted]

It will not be necessary to resort to fiscal credit or printing money.

The Dollar in the Budget [subhead]

Yesterday Cabezas said that the general budget of the nation was calculated on the basis of an average exchange rate of 2.38 bolivianos per dollar. This means that the dollar rate of exchange will remain stable throughout 1988.

The government estimates that the inflation rate will not surpass 10 percent.

Brazil

Debt-Equity Swap Auction Held 29 March

PY300148 Brasilia Domestic Service in Portuguese
2200 GMT 29 Mar 88

[Text] The first auction of the debt-equity swap was held today in Rio de Janeiro. The first round of the auction for conversion of the foreign debt into risk capital at the Rio de Janeiro stock exchange closed 2 hours after it began, with the conversion of $73 million at a discount rate of 27 percent on an offering of $75 million. The remaining $2 million was prorated at a discount of 26.5 percent.

The highest bids of $15.6 million and approximately $17 million were made by the brokerage houses Multiplex of Rio de Janeiro, and (Sidosa). The Rio de Janeiro stock exchange is now proceeding with the second $75 million round of the auction, in the areas that benefit from fiscal incentives.

List of New Army Generals Reported

PY292258 Sao Paulo FOLHA DE SAO PAULO in Portuguese 29 Mar 88 p 4A

[Excerpts] Brasilia— Today at 1500 Army Minister General Leonidas Pires Goncalves will deliver to President Jose Sarney the list of officers promoted last Friday by the High Command. The list includes 24 officers promoted to the rank of Army General, Division General, and Brigadier General.

Following these promotions, General Carlos Olavo Guimaraes, the current chief of the Army Social Communications Center [Centro de Comucicacao Social do Exercito—Cecomex], will retire. Colonel Werlon Coaracy de Roure, who currently is Gen Pires' congressional adviser

in the Constituent Assembly and who has been promoted to brigadier general, has reportedly been mentioned as Guimaraes' replacement. [passage omitted]

Following is the list of officers promoted to the rank of Army general: Decio Barbosa Machado, Oswaldo Muniz Oliva, and Jonas de Morais Correia Neto; to the rank of division general: Luiz Paulo Fernandes de Almeida, Amaury Sa Freire de Lima, Francisco Rodriguez Fernandes Junior, Benedito Onovre Bezerra Leonel, and Edson Alves Mey; and to the rank of brigadier general: Jose Luiz Gameiro, Luiz Oscar Bulcao de Lima, Agenor Francisco Homen de Carvalho, Candido Vargas de Freire, Thaumaturgo Sotero Vaz, Antonio Araujo de Medeiros, Lelio Goncalves Rodriguez da Silva, Jose Ary Lacombe, Joao Coseanza, Luciano Casales, Francisco Stuart Pamplona, Paulo Dornelles da Silva, Waldesteien Iran, Benito Nino Bisio, Romildo Canhim, and Werlon Coaracy de Roure.

Chile

Comment, Reportage on Plebiscite Vote

Merino on 'Chaos'

PY300309 Santiago Domestic Service in Spanish 2300 GMT 29 Mar 88

[Text] Admiral Jose Toribio Merino has said he fully agrees with Interior Minister Sergio Fernandez' comment that chaos will prevail in the country if the no vote wins in the plebiscite.

The Navy commander in chief made it clear that the interior minister made this comment following remarks by the opposition that if the no vote wins the government and the Constitution should be changed that very day.

Adm Merino said this remark was recently made by Patricio Aylwin, the Christian Democratic Party [PDC] president, and it is something that undoubtedly would mean chaos for the country.

[Begin Merino recording] Mr Aylwin's remark that in case the no vote wins the government and the Constitution would automatically be changed that same day is incorrect. That is incorrect. There will be nothing of the sort. [Words indistinct] chaos, indeed.

Undoubtedly, there would be chaos if there was no authority in Chile on the day the plebiscite was held. However, there will be no such thing.

The Constitution is extremely clear. The Constitution clearly establishes what happens in case the no vote wins and what happens in case the yes vote wins. The purpose of the plebiscite is also extremely clear. The plebiscite's goal is to approve the candidate proposed by the commanders in chief, and not to approve or reject the established Constitution. [end recording]

Adm Merino recalled that over the past 14 years the government has accomplished a great task in the social, economic, and legislative fields, totally changing the country's organization.

If an effort was made to change the government and the authorities overnight, this would undoubtedly mean chaos, Merino said.

[Begin Merino recording] However, we have clearly said that after 15 years in power the government could not let down a country whose organization has been completely and totally changed, whose Constitution has been changed, a country in which a new economic system has been established, a country in which new social and labor laws have been established, a country that has been reorganized. This is not the first time in its life, but for the first time in the past 50 years the country has been steadily growing economically.

It would be absurd to say that chaos will prevail in the country if the yes vote does not win. However, it will be chaos indeed if the same day the no vote wins [words indistinct] authorities in Chile as intended by the PDC. That would be total chaos, indeed. I fully agree with the interior minister on this point. [end recording]

Adm Merino reiterated that the plebiscite's goal is for the citizens to approve or reject the candidate proposed by the government junta.

Adm Merino said it is incorrect that in the plebiscite the citizens will express their approval or rejection of the Constitution, as proposed by the opposition.

That is a lie, Merino emphasized, and the opposition is just confusing the people.

Youth Group Created

PY291751 Santiago EL MERCURIO in Spanish 23 Mar 88 p C 2

[Excerpts] Twelve youth sectors of opposition political parties yesterday created the "Youth Movement for the No Vote." The PCCh and the historical faction of the Socialist Party have been excluded from this movement, which was established to defeat the government at the upcoming plebiscite.

Yesterday the Youth Movement for Democracy and Free Elections met with the press to deliver a public statement in which the creation of this youth movement was announced.

According to this statement the talks to reach a political agreement among the various groups have not produced an agreement with the PCCh and the historical faction of the Socialist Party. [passage omitted]

Regarding the creation of the "Youth Movement for the No Vote," the statement says that "its main objective is to allow all youths, militant or independent; students, shanty-town residents, workers, artists, or professionals to pick up the challenge of saying 'no to the dictatorship.'"

The Youth Movement for the No Vote stressed that it regards the no vote as a "rejection of the current system because it reveals our total opposition to an oppressive and exclusive system which does not allow us to build our future." It also described the no vote as "a unifying cohesive no." [passage omitted]

The statement was signed by the youth sectors of the Christian Democratic Party, the Chilean Socialist Party, the Socialist Youth (N) [not further identified], the Socialist Youth (M) [not further identified], the Revolutionary Radical Party, the Chilean Radical Party, the Humanist Party, the United Popular Action Movement, the Christian Leftist Party, the Republican Party, and the Republican Liberal Party.

Communist Strategy Viewed

PY291657 Santiago Domestic Service in Spanish 1030 GMT 29 Mar 88

[By Raul Pena]

[Text] The communists have again changed their strategy and have decided to participate in the plebiscite. But since they cannot participate legally—because they have been outlawed—they will join the PPD [Party for Democracy] through the back door. This party has given the communists the opportunity to join as independent leftists. A large number of communist youths have already joined this umbrella party, which has been joined by (?eight) youth Socialist, MAPU [United Popular Action Movement], Christian Left, Radical, and even former Christian Democratic sectors.

The first symptom of this change in communist strategy is the fact that the PPD will not criticize the violent actions through which the Communist Party has opposed the current institutional system. The opposition, like an old and experienced boxer, knows how to absorb a punch. In fact, a communist charge that the opposition supports the continuation of the current system—because it has agreed to the Constitution and to participate in the plebiscite—has gone unanswered.

Proof of this is a recent news conference during which the PPD announced that three Christian Left youth leaders and two Almeyda-led Socialist sector leaders—the five of them had their original party memberships cancelled while they were members of the PPD—have joined the PPD. (Jorge Pecci), Eduardo Baez, and (Lorena Fria) left the group led by Luis Maira and (Batista Gumucio), while (Ivan Levy) and (Oscar Santoriza) decided some time ago to leave the party led by Clodomiro Almeyda and German Correa. These and other youth opposition leaders announced that the PPD will not participate in the elections within the university, because the umbrella party was created only for the plebiscite. This assertion does not deserve much credibility, because the Christian Democrats will seek the support of the Socialists, Radicals, and communists to form a political pact, disregarding the opinion of (?the rank-and-file).

The way things are, everything is going in favor of the communists, who continue to infiltrate opposition sectors like the Social Democratic Party, whose leaders have denounced this infiltration.

The Communist Party is forbidden by law to engage in political activities; yet it has done it through other organizations which have ignored the Marxists' support for violence. This is precisely why Julieta Campusano and (Patricio Alex) gave the signal to start the registration procedure with the electoral registries. This is the change in strategy of the communists, a change that has been accepted by the opposition, whose leaders have refrained from criticizing the Communist Party. Now what will the reaction be of Andres Zaldivar, who said that the communists would destroy themselves?

MIR Leaders on Stand

PY281763 Moscow in Spanish to Chile 2130 GMT 26 Mar 88

[Report on "highlights" of interview given by Movement of the Revolutionary Left leaders to Buenos Aires journalist Sandra Russo of PAGINA 12, in Santiago]

[Text] On 10 March, the Buenos Aires newspaper PAGINA 12 published an article by its special correspondent in Chile Sandra Russo. The article includes an interview with the clandestine leadership of the Movement of the Revolutionary Left [MIR].

The Argentine journalist writes: Chileans are approaching the date of the plebiscite that will decide who will be their next president amidst an increasingly hot atmosphere characterized by the extention of the state of emergency, political strife, and terrorist attacks that disturb deserted streets after 1100 p.m.

The article adds that this is the first interview that the clandestine MIR leadership has granted in over a year and that it was held this week in Santiago.

In the interview, the four main MIR leaders discuss their position regarding the upcoming plebiscite following the split by the Chilean opposition into two large blocs.

After three tense meetings with a contact in Santiago, and in public, the journalist was blindfolded and taken to a private house where she was awaited by Pablo, Antonio, Rodrigo, and Arturo who had just arrived in Santiago. All four of them were wearing hoods. There was no excessive display of guns during the meeting but there were guns in the room. During their introduction

the MIR leaders appologized for wearing hoods, for the meetings that had been canceled to avoid being followed, the exhibition of guns, and the overall intimidating atmosphere.

Pablo said that during the past year they had been submerged in an exhaustive debate about violence and death, which, he said, is a social fact, a social relation, because, he said, a rifle can kill. You can also be killed if someone throws a typewriter at you. Beyond the instrument we must reflect on this relationship which leads to death and killings.

[Russo] There are some leftist sectors which have decided to promote the no vote. Within the United Left [IU], of which the MIR is a member, there was a recent incident when some socialist sectors expressed their support for the no vote. What was the internal development that led to the establishment of these two large blocs?

[Pablo] To understand what is happening in Chile today we must restrict ourselves to three current strategies: first is upheld by the regime, which wants to go from a military-police control stage to one of political control with a consensus. Within this strategy, there are small irrelevant differences on whether Pinochet will be a civilian or military candidate, but all of them are mere noises.

The second strategy is that upheld by what we refer to as the bourgeoisie opposition headed by the Christian Democratic Party. This is a complex faction, difficult to study from a social point of view because it is supported by bourgeois sectors as well as by labor sectors influenced by a bourgeois leadership.

The third strategy is that upheld by the people's movement. In 1986 there were sufficient elements that allowed us to think that we could achieve significant progress in this regard, but the movement has stagnated.

The people's movement is today divided into two antagonistic strategies. There is one sector which believes it is possible to defeat Pinochet if the no vote wins. There is another sector, comprised of the Communist Party and the MIR, which believes that the only current valid struggle is that which is against the plebiscite. We view the plebiscite not as a technical issue but as the succession of tactical maneuvers aimed at intimidating the people through terror.

We wish to express our solidarity with the comrades who are working in favor of the yes vote. We understand that this form of struggle is valid for many people, and we cannot judge them. However, we think that their action will not guarantee the reconstruction of democracy.

[Russo] What is the role of the armed struggle within this scene you have just described?

[Rodrigo] We are a political-military organization and therefore we think it is essential that the people have a military capacity because the dictatorship is military. The repression has worsened and will worsen further. We must extend our self-defense through the country.

[Ruso] Some people think that the armed struggle could cause a boomerang reaction justifying the regime.

[Pablo] History demonstrates exactly the opposite. This regime did not need our vanguard military activity for it to apply state terrorism. If no military activities had been carried out in the last 14 years, the traditional leftist profile would now be much more weak. An essential step toward the moral reconstruction of the people was to demonstrate that the regime cannot act with total impunity. I believe that this kind of criticism stems from the fact that military activities have been reduced merely to commando actions.

[Russo] The government announced a month ago that the MIR and the Manuel Rodriguez Patriotic Front [FPMR] planned to carry out joint actions this year. This has not been either confirmed or denied.

[Pablo] That is propaganda of the dictatorship. We are morally and political identified with the FPMR, but it is not necessary to plan any joint action or to establish clandestine agreements.

[Russo] What would happen to the armed struggle if a freely elected civilian government were elected in Chile?

[Pablo] As long as the great democratic measures demanded by the people are not adopted, no popular organization may disarm itself. How to use military power is another matter. The struggle will not be abandoned until those responsible for the repression are tried. This is not a task for the bourgeoisie, but for the people.

Our struggle will continue. We are not engaged in a gun trade fetishism. We are aware that this struggle is not a proletariat revolution but a struggle for an unrestricted democracy.

The 1980 Constitution does not accept reforms. It must be modified completely, otherwise our future will be very fragile. If we observe attentively the processes of Brazil, Uruguay, and Argentina, we can see that the transition to democracy is totally obscure if the leaderships of the dictatorships remain untouched, that is, if the financial and intelligence apparatus remain unmodified. This can lead to a catastrophe at best the military counteroffensive ensues.

Russo writes that the exit from the house that morning was similar to the arrival, with the same safety measures to avoid recognizing the place. The car stopped near a station, and that is where the contact ended.

On the way to the airport, the taxi driver commented with enthusiasm that he had registered at the electoral court to be able to issue his no vote in the plebiscite. We will bend the generalissimo's arm, he said.

A little before arriving at the Pudahual Airport, the taxi driver asked Russo if she knew about one of the posters used in the yes vote campaign. The poster showed a map of Chile with a stethoscope, stating that they, the military, are looking after us. The Medical Association immediately published a paid advertisement because the stethoscope in the picture was upside down.

We have read the highlights of the interview carried out in Chile by journalist Sandra Russo with the MIR leaders, as published by the newspaper PAGINA 12 in Buenos Aires.

Briefs

Foreign Debt Figures

According to the Central Bank, the foreign debt amounted to $18.962 billion in January, which is $137 million less than in 1987 when it stood at $19.099 billion. These figures reveal that the Chilean foreign debt has reached its lowest level since 1984. [Summary] [*PY291818 Santiago EL MERCURIO in Spanish 23 Mar 88 p B 1*]

Colombia

Venezuelan Right to Los Monjes Challenged

PA300149 Hamburg DPA in Spanish 1813 GMT 27 Mar 88

[Text] Bogota, 27 Mar (DPA)—For the first time in its history, Colombia's State Council will hear a suit challenging the legality of a note issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1952 in which Colombia renounced all claims to the Los Monjes Archipelago in favor of Venezuela.

The suit was filed by a group of lawyers who argue that Juan Uribe Holguin, then minister of foreign affairs, was not legally empowered to send a note compromising the Colombian Government's position on sovereignty over Los Monjes.

In 1952, when Colombia was experiencing violent domestic upheaval, Uribe Holguin sent a letter to Venezuelan officials, on letterhead paper, in which he stated in cordial terms that Colombia renounced its claim to Los Monjes. Venezuela uses that document to support its claim to sovereignty over the archipelago.

On previous occasions, lawyers have attempted to challenge the document before the State Council, but their briefs were rejected on the grounds that they contained errors in form.

The Los Monjes case and the fact that the sea and underwater borders in the Gulf of Venezuela are not demarcated have caused friction between the two countries in the past.

Paraguay

Ortigoza's Daughter, Attorney Leave Country

PY292111 Madrid EFE in Spanish 1606 GMT 29 Mar 88

[Excerpt] Asuncion, 29 Mar (EFE)—Today it was reported that Mirta Ortigoza, the daughter of former Paraguayan Army Captain Napoleon Ortigoza, and attorney Felino Amarilla, who last week helped Capt Ortigoza escape from house arrest, have secretly left the country and are now in Buenos Aires.

Celeste Amarilla, the attorney's sister, told EFE that Ortigoza's daughter and attorney Amarilla left the country last Sunday night at some point on the Paraguayan-Argentine border, a point that was not revealed.

Celeste Amarilla added that Mirta Ortigoza and Felino Amarilla boarded an airplane in the city of Formosa, in northern Argentina, and arrived in Buenos Aires yesterday morning.

No arrest warrant has been issued against Mirta Ortigoza or Felino Amarilla.

Celeste Amarilla said her brother's departure was decided by his brother's party, the authentic Radical Liberal Party (PLRA), in order "to avoid political cost." [passage omitted]

Interior Ministry Bans LA REPUBLICA

PY292052 Asuncion LA TARDE in Spanish 29 Mar 88 p 9

[Text] Miguel Angel Caballero Figun, director of the newspaper LA REPUBLICA, has reported that the Interior Ministry has henceforth forbidden the publication of this newspaper. LA REPUBLICA was published at the Salesian Priests' printing shop, which is headed by Father Jose Antonio Antonio Figun [name as published].

According to Caballero Figun, yesterday morning when he went to receive copies of the newspaper for distribution, Father Rubio told him the Interior Ministry has warned him early in the morning that if LA REPUBLICA were printed the printing shop would be closed. Caballero Figun stated: "In addition to being unusual, this development is a new attack on freedom of the press."

"The argument or excuse for closing my newspaper is the same pretext used for closing EL PUEBLO: the vocabulary [lenguaje] or some other pretext," Caballero Figun

stated. He added: "In this case the closing of LA REPUBLICA contradicts everything the government said before the elections. It is obvious this government is not interested in the free expression of our thoughts."

Caballero Figun made a point of saying that he will publish LA REPUBLICA no matter what.

Venezuela

Justice Minister Offers To Resign Over Charges

PA291736 Paris AFP in Spanish 0500 GMT 29 Mar 88

[Text] Caracas, 29 Mar (AFP)—This afternoon the privately owned Venevision television station reported that Justice Minister Jose Manzo Gonzalez has placed his post at President Jaime Lusinchi's disposal after being charged with wrongdoing by the Christian Democratic opposition.

Citing sources from Miraflores Palace (presidential offices), Venevision said that Manzo will be replaced by Pedro Torres Agudos, who is currently the director of the Venezuelan Judicial Technical Police.

Among other things, the opposition Christian Democrats charge that Manzo has created a parallel police force with funds from the U.S. DEA.

New Minister Sworn In

PA292015 Caracas Venezolana de Television Canal 8 in Spanish 1600 GMT 29 Mar 88

[Text] Right now President Jaime Lusinchi is swearing-in Dr Pedro Torres Agudo as Venezuela's minister of justice to replace Dr Jose Manzo Gonzalez.

Dr Torres Agudo was director of the Judicial Technical Police. His appointment has been well received by some sectors of the country.

The new Judicial Technical Police director is Mauro Yanez.

Former Minister Manzo Gonzalez will resume his post in Congress.

Guyana

Government Presents Budget, Outlines Measures

FL300200 Bridgetown CANA in English 0010 GMT 29 Mar 88

[Text] Georgetown, Guyana, March 28, CANA—The Guyana Government on Monday presented a 3.9 billion dollar (one Guyana dollar=10 U.S. cents) budget for 1988 showing an overall deficit of 1.186 billion dollars.

Contrary to public speculation, in presenting the budget, Finance Minister Carl Greenidge announced no devaluation of the Guyana dollar and gave no indication as to whether an agreement with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) was imminent. He, however, reiterated statements made a month ago by President Desmond Hoyte that there would be no further devaluation of the Guyana dollar unless it takes place within the framework of an agreed programme of financial and economic support which guarantees the inflow of substantial amounts of foreign exchange to enable the economy as a whole to benefit.

Greenidge reported that the Guyana economy grew by only 0.7 per cent last year and projected that it will grow this year by three per cent. He said the government hopes to finance the budget deficit through external financial inflows.

He announced that from October 1, Guyanese importers will no longer require to first obtain licences to import from Caribbean Community (Caricom) countries.

He also announced that among the fiscal measures to be implemented this year are:

The raising of the ceiling for exemption from property tax from the current 50,000 dollars to 100,000 dollars;

Adjustments to the regulations pertaining to estate duty and amending the country's traffic regulations to increase the minimum fines for some traffic offences from 50 dollars to 500 dollars;

Repealing the country's consumption tax regulations;

Modifying the national savings schemes such as the Deferred Income Account (DIA) and the Home Investment Account (HIA) to establish certain limits.

Greenidge also hinted at the possibility of retrenchment in the public sector, indicating that there will likely be a four per cent decline in employment costs this year.

He was critical of the performance of some public sector agencies and announced that the operations of some of the problematic ones were under review with a view to determining their faith.

In addition, there will be stricter monitoring of the operations of public sector entities and the laws pertaining to their payment of dividends to the central government will be enforced. Public sector agencies which are very liquid will be required to transfer funds in excess of their immediate and investment requirements to the government treasury, he reported.

Referring to the three per cent real growth projections for 1988, he said this is premised largely on the improved performance of the main pillars of the economy—sugar, rice and bauxite—in addition to gold and diamonds.

He said sugar production is expected to rise by four per cent this year, rice production by nine per cent and bauxite production by 40 per cent while gold and diamonds are expected to show improved returns largely because of incentives now in place.

Opposition members of parliament have complained about copies of the estimates of the current and capital revenue and expenditure not being made available to MPs in advance of the budget presentation by Greenidge.

Lone Working People's Alliance member of parliament, Eusi Kwayana, also complained that even after the presentation copies of Greenidge's speech were not available for MPs and members of the press. And giving his immediate reaction to the budget presentation, Kwayana told CANA he had never before listened to a budget speech as empty as today's. Everything seems so very tentative, he said.

Suriname

Netherlands Foreign Minister Continues Visit

Holds Talks With Shankar

FL291839 Paramaribo International Service in English 1730 GMT 29 Mar 88

[Text] Suriname must have the possibility and room to work on its affairs independently. Our country has the right to the money which is in Holland and the government hopes that a development relation on short term will be resumed. This was stated yesterday by President Ramsewak Shankar after his discussions with the Dutch foreign minister, Van den Broek. President Shankar told the Dutch minister that Suriname wants to give content to the democratic process independently and without interference from outside.

The Surinamese head of state told the daily DE WARE TIJD that the treaty which was signed in 1975 will not be put aside or amended. He said that Suriname will not cooperate in the internationalizing of the treaty.

Meets With Top Officials

FL291853 Paramaribo International Service in English 1730 GMT 29 Mar 88

[Text] The Dutch minister of foreign affairs, Hans Van den Broek, yesterday held discussions with President Shankar and Vice President Henck Arron. Mr Van den Broek also held discussions yesterday with Suriname Foreign Minister Sedoc and Assembly Chairman Jaggernath Lachmon. Yesterday the Dutch foreign minister told the local media that, among others, discussions were held on the democratization process, the prospects for a solution to the conflict in the interior, and the very serious economic situation. The Dutch foreign minister said that the talks with the Surinamese leader were extremely useful, open, and constructive.

Meets Unionists, Employers

FL291916 Paramaribo International in English 1730 GMT 29 Mar 88

[Text] The foreign affairs minister of Holland, Mr Van den Broek, who is currently on a 3-day official visit to Suriname, yesterday held discussions with the labor movement and the employers organization.

Fred Derby, of the C-47 Trade Union Federation, told our newsroom this morning that the labor movement yesterday called for the immediate resumption of the Dutch development aid which was suspended by Holland in 1982. The labor movement is of the opinion that the development aid must be used to make Suriname self-reliant because the movement is against paternalism. The workers' representative further said that the money from the development aid must be invested in the productive sector while mechanisms must be included to assure the resumption of the aid and the [words indistinct] of corruption.

KLM Office Near Netherlands Embassy Burned

PA291720 Paris AFP in Spanish 1542 GMT 29 Mar 88

[Text] Paramaribo, 29 Mar—The office of the Netherlands KLM airline was burned here Monday night, on the 2d day of Netherlands Foreign Minister Hans Van den Broek's visit to Suriname.

According to preliminary reports, the fire at the KLM office, located across the street from the Netherlands Embassy, was caused by Molotov cocktails.

Approximately 500 people had demonstrated Monday afternoon in front of the National Assembly to protest assistance they claim the Netherlands is lending to Ronnie Brunswijk's rebel forces. They also demanded resumption of financial aid halted by The Hague in 1982.

On Sunday night, someone tried to set fire to the Netherlands Fatum Insurance Company offices in Paramaribo.

The resumption of financial aid by the Netherlands—Suriname's former colonial power—was the main subject of the talks between Van den Broek and President Shankar Ramsewak.

The Hague expressed its willingness to renew financial assistance though a multilateral organization such as the World Bank. This arrangement, however, is not acceptable to Surinamese authorities.